

~~TOP SECRET EIDER~~

NSC BRIEFING
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OFFSHORE ISLANDS

NSA Declassification/Release Instructions on File.

- I. On 13 Feb, day after 7th Fleet completed evacuation, Peiping radio boasted ChiComs had "liberated" Tachens.
 - A. ChiCom plans for Tachens not known, but may make two larger islands into naval base for operations to south.
 - B. Tachen terrain, and problem of keeping island supplied with large amounts of POL, would make it difficult, perhaps impossible for ChiComs build air base there.
- II. Peiping's announcement of "liberation" Tachens made pointed reference to Nanchishan, as only island off Chekiang coast not yet taken.
 - A. Because ChiComs may believe US unwilling to defend Nanchishan, this island may well be next target.

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craft operating near Wenchow (40 mi to NW), likely staging area for any assault on Nanchishan. Also, [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] several ChiCom

ships began moving south from Shanghai on 15 Feb.

III. ChiNats have vowed to defend Nanchishan at all costs: Chiang told press (16 Feb) he regarded Nanchishan as part of Matsu group, "which US will defend."

A. MAAG says Nats rumored planning to withdraw 2,500 Nat regulars on island, replace them with guerrilla forces taken from Tachens. Total guerrilla strength might reach 5,000-6,000.

B. Taipei planning evacuate Nanchishan civilians (about 2,000). Some 900 already taken to Formosa, according to ChiNat press.

IV. Situation quiet in Matsus following scare

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reports of ChiCom ship concentration last week.

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vessels and 600 junks massed along coast opposite Matsus on 11 Feb.

1. Thought invasion might be imminent, requested permission to bomb ships.
- B. CNO withheld permission pending further reconnaissance. Following days showed no unusual activity: number vessels reported was normal for area.
- C. However, ChiCom assault on Matsus possible at any time, although we believe probing operations would come first.

V. In Quemoys, situation also quiet, but ChiComs apparently continue preparations.

- A. MAAG at Taipei believes Quemoys are next ChiCom target. MAAG bases belief on recent heavy vehicular traffic in area, including artillery movements, and on increase in artillery positions.

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B. CHINA: OFFICIALS SAY

artillery positions now ring Quemoy.

Not confirmed, but this compares with
about 450 reported last fall.

(Positions not all occupied. G-2 esti-
mates 160-200 artillery weapons in
area).

C. We believe these preparations not
necessarily geared to early invasion
attempt. As in Matsus, ChiComs more
likely to conduct probing action
first, as test US intentions.